

*London is hosting high level meetings between some of the world's most powerful leaders today, in a final effort to find common ground ahead of tomorrow's G20 summit. Our diplomatic correspondent Bridget Kendall reports:*

**The stakes are high** and rarely have so many powerful leaders gathered in one place to try **to forge** a common position. Although all agree united action is needed, with only a day to go before the G20 summit, **cracks are beginning to emerge**, as different countries push their own priorities. France's President Sarkozy has even threatened to walk out if the tough financial regulation he wants is **watered down**. Perhaps it's **pre-summit bluster** - more may become clear at his joint press conference this afternoon with the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel.

She's again shown her irritation at American calls for a global increase in spending **to jump-start growth**. China is **holding out** for **increased clout** in institutions like the IMF, and Russia backs any change that will **dilute** American influence.

Today's pre-summit meetings include President Obama's first **face to face encounters** with the Russian and Chinese Presidents where all are hoping for a fresh start. And **getting off on the right foot** with the new American President is high on everyone's priority. His officials say he wants to listen as well as lead in London. Gordon Brown will be hoping the Obama charm will be enough to save his summit from disappointment.

Bridget Kendall, BBC News, London

## Vocabulary and definitions

<b>The stakes are high</b>	a lot depends on the outcome of these meetings
<b>to forge</b>	to make or produce (something difficult)
<b>cracks are beginning to emerge</b>	problems are starting to become obvious
<b>watered down</b>	when an idea or opinion is intentionally made to appear less important, usually so other people will be more likely to accept it (similar meaning to ' <b>dilute</b> ')
<b>pre-summit bluster</b>	someone speaking in an angry and argumentative way (with little effect) prior to the summit starting
<b>to jump-start growth</b>	to try to make the economy grow (quickly and suddenly)
<b>holding out</b>	waiting until they get what they want
<b>increased clout</b>	more power and influence
<b>face to face encounters</b>	meetings in person
<b>getting off on the right foot</b>	beginning a relationship in the right way, making a good impression

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